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Saint Elijah, (Surrian Il'ia), is the lord of thunder and lightning. Anyone who has been struck by lightning, is thought to have offended this saint and therefore to have been hit by his bullet. Here Elijah has taken the place of the original pagan god of the thunderstorm who hurls his thunderbolt, the lightning, against the dragon which is the cloud, and releases the waters which the demon had kept imprisoned. This is proved by the fact that the same function has been assigned to Elijah and especially to the angel Gabriel in the popular belief of Armenia, where this old Indo-Iranian myth of the slaying of the dragon by the god of the thunderstorm is preserved in a form that is still more complete than that of the rather simplified and less colorful Ossetic version. (Cf. Manuk Abeghian, Der armenische Volksglaube, [Leipsig, 1890], pp. 78ff., and B. Geiger, Die Amesha Spentas, Sitzungsberichte der Wiener Akad. d. Wiss., Vol. 176 [1916], pp. 65ff.) The relatives and friends of a person killed by a lightning express joy and sing and dance, suppressing all tears and sadness over the death of the person, from fear of making Vatsilla angry; this strange custom is obviously the result of a later development of this version of the myth. Like this attitude towards the deceased, the manner in which he is buried also belongs to the sphere of pagan popular belief. The body is either buried at the place of the accident, or it is placed on a

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